

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMEMBASSY DUBLIN
TO USINFO WASHDC
INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 0832

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 DUBLIN 02341

E.O. 11652: N/A
SUBJECT: ARTICLE IN THE HIBERNIA WEEKLY

FOLLOWING ARTICLE APPEARED IN THE HIBERNIA WEEKLY
UNDER THE HEADING TIME TO JOIN NATO?

I SEE THAT LOUIS HEREN OF THE TIMES HAS VERY PROPERLY
TAKEN SEAN MCBRIDE TO TASK FOR HIS VIEWS ON
INTERNATIONAL NEWS DISSEMINATION. TO JUDGE FROM A
RECENT SPEECH, MCBRIDE'S COMPLAINT IS THAT THE PRESS
AGENCIES OF THE WEST DOMINATE THE WORLD NEWS SCENE
AND THAT MATERIAL PUT OUT BY THE EASTERN AND
NEUTRALISGDNIZBLOCS DOESN'T GET AN EQUAL HEARING.

IT CERTAINLY ISN'T FOR WANT OF TRYING. THE COMMUNIST
COUNTRIES AT LEAST ARE ONLY TOO WILLING TO SWAMP THE
WORLD WITH WORDS. ONE CANNOT TURN A RADIO TO THE
SHORT WAVE BUT ONE HEARS ENDLESS WODGES OF PROPAGANDA
STODGE READ OUT IN CLIPPED TONES FROM MOSCOW OR
BERLIN OR WHATEVER. IF THE NEWS DISSEMINATED FROM
THE EAST DOESN'T GET A HEARING, IT IS NOT FOR WANT OF
ACCESS; IT IS BECAUSE NO-ONE WANTS TO HEAR IT. THERE
IS ABSOLUTELY NOTHING TO STOP THE RUSSIANS FROM
BUILDING UP AN AGENCY WITH WORLD-WIDE COVERAGE -
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EXCEPT THAT NO-ONE WOULD BUY THE OUTPUT. THERE IS
SOMETHING PREPOSTEROUS AND SINISTER IN THE NOTION THAT
PEOPLE SHOULD BE ALLOWED ONLY TO HEAR THE NEWS SOURCE
THEY BELIEVE PROVIDED EQUAL TIME IS GIVEN TO THE ONE
THEY DON'T.

IT APPEARS THAT MCBRIDE'S IDEA IS THAT INTERNATIONAL

NEWS DISSEMINATION SHOULD BE DONE BY GOVERNMENT AGENCIES AND THAT THE ROLE OF THE PRIVATE-ENTERPRISE AGENCIES SHOULD BE MINIMISED. HE IS, IN SHORT, IN FAVOUR OF A POLICY WHICH, IF IT HAD BEEN IN FORCE 60 YEARS AGO, WOULD HAVE ENSURED THAT THE ONLY NEWS ABOUT THE 1916 RISING AND THE WAR OF INDEPENDENCE WHICH WOULD HAVE BEEN SPREAD AROUND THE WORLD WOULD HAVE BEEN BRITISH OFFICIAL RELEASES. I WONDER WHAT HIS FATHER AND MOTHER WOULD HAVE THOUGHT OF IT.

AND ALL THIS IS NOT JUST TALK. MCBRIDE IS CHAIRMAN OF A UNESCO COMMITTEE TO INVESTIGATE THE SUBJECT; AND GIVEN THAT THE MAJORITY OF UN COUNTRIES ARE CENSORSHIP-MINDED, WE MAY EXPECT OFFICIAL UN ENDORSEMENT FOR A REPORT WHICH CALLS FOR GOVERNMENTS TO HAVE CONTROL OF NEWS. THIS WOULD GIVE THE SEAL OF UN APPROVAL TO EVERY BLOODTHIRSTY DICTATORSHIP WHICH WANTS TO EXCLUDE OUTSIDE REPORTING, THE BETTER TO COVER UP THE MISDEEDS WHICH GO ON INSIDE ITS TERRITORY. IF THIS IS HOW THE MCBRIDE COMMITTEE TURNS OUT, IT WILL BE A SAD AND ILLIBERAL ENDING TO A NOTABLE CAREER.

MENTION OF THE UNESCO COMMITTEE BRINGS US NATURALLY ON TO ANOTHER CURRENT TOPIC - NATO - FOR IT WAS WHEN MCBRIDE WAS MINISTER FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS THAT IT WAS DECIDED THAT THE REPUBLIC SHOULD NOT JOIN NATO, WHICH UNCLASSIFIED

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WAS THEN BEING SET UP. THE OSTENSIBLE REASON FOR THIS DECISION WAS THAT, WHILE OF COURSE WE WERE IN SYMPATHY WITH THE IDEA OF PROTECTING THE WEST AGAINST COMMUNISM, WE COULD NOT JOIN AN ALLIANCE WHICH HAD AS ONE OF ITS MEMBERS GREAT BRITAIN, WHICH WAS OCCUPYING OUR FOURTH GREEN FIELD. ONE SUSPECTS HOWEVER THAT MCBRIDE'S PERSHALUNELOGICAL PREDILECTIONS HAD A LOTHONWLG WITH THE DECISION. AS TIME WENT BY THE OSTENSIBLE REASON BECAME MORE AND MORE UNREAL. WE RUSHED TO JOIN THE EEC, ALTHOUGH BRITAIN WAS JOINING TOO; LOYALTY TO KATHLEEN NI HOULIHAN AND THE NATIONAL IDEAL MAY BE ONE THING, BUT HIGH AND GUARANTEED AGRICULTURAL PRICES ARE QUITE ANOTHER. AND SINCE THE BRITISH-IRISH NEGOTIATIONS OF SUNNINGDALE, THE IDEA OF THE BORDER BEING A BAR TO OUR JOINING NATO IS JUST A JOKE.

AFTER THE DECISION TO STAY OUT OF NATO HAD BEEN MADE, A TENDENCY AROSE TO PORTRAY IT, NOT AS A RELUCTANTLY-ACQUIESCED-IN NECESSITY, BUT AS A POSITIVELY-GOOD POLICY. THAT WAS THE ERA WHEN THE INSUFFERABLE PANDIT NEHRU WAS PROCLAIMING THE VIRTUES OF THE

NEUTRALIST WORLD, AS A GROUP OF NATIONS PURE AND
PEACEABLE AS DRIVEN SNOW, RAISED UP ABOVE
THE EVIL AND WARMONGERING COUNTRIES OF THE WEST AND
EAST BLOCS. TIME HAS DEALT HARDLY WITH THAT PICTURE.
THE THIRD WORLD CAN NOW BE SEEN AS THE WARLIKE WORLD,
THE WORLD OF POOR COUNTRIES, GENERALLY DICTATORSHIPS,
WHOSE STANDARDS OF INTERNATIONAL CONDUCT ARE NO BETTER
THAN ANY OTHERS, WHO SPEND AN EXTRAVAGANT AMOUNT
OF THE WEALTH OF THEIR UNFORTUNATE IMPOVERISHED
CITIZENRY ON ARMAMENTS, AND BETWEEN WHOM ALL THE WARS

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TO USINFO WASHDC

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OF THIS EAR OCCUR. IF ANYTHING, THERE IS DISGRACE,
NOT CREDIT, IN BEING A MEMBER OF THE NEUTRALIST BLOC.

SO IT IS TIME WE LOOKED AT THE MATTER OF JOINING NATO.
AND NOT LEAST OF THE ADVANTAGES IT OFFERS IS THAT IT
WILL INVOLVE THE NATO MEMBERS OTHER THAN BRITAIN, AND
THE MAINLAND SEVEN OF THE EEC IN PARTICULAR, INDIRECTLY
IN THE NORTHERN PROBLEM, AND THAT CANNOT FAIL TO BE
FOR GOOD. JUST AS NATO HAS A PERMANENT INTEREST IN
RESOLVING GREEK AND TURKISH DIFFERENCES, SINCE BOTH
ARE MEMBERS, IT WOULD HAVE AN INTEREST IN RESOLVING
BRITISH-IRISH DIFFERENCES. NO DOUBT THE EXISTING
MEMBERS WOULD NOT WANT TO BE SUCKED INTO THE NORTHERN
ISSUE, WHICH PRESUMABLY PART-EXPLAINS THE LACK OF
PRESSURE BEING PUT ON US TO JOIN. BUT IF OUR
GOVERNMENT IS SERIOUS ABOUT WANTING PEACE ON THIS
ISLAND, IT SHOULD LOOK HARD AT THE POSSIBILITY OF
ENLISTING EUROPEAN AID IN THIS WAY.

IN 1925, AN INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENT WAS MADE ABOUT THE

MINERAL RIGHTS OF SPITZBERGEN, NOW CALLED (AT LEAST
BY THE NORWEGIANS) SVALBARD. WHILE NORWAY GOT
SOVEREIGNTY OVER THE ISLAND, WHICH LIES TO THE NORTH
OF THAT COUNTRY, IT WAS AGREED THAT ITS MINERAL
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RESOURCES SHOULD BE OPEN TO THE AGREEMENTS SIGNATORIES
AND TO THIS DAY THE RUSSIANS MINE COAL ON SPITZBERGEN.

IT HAS NOW BEEN ESTABLISHED WITH REASONABLE
CERTAINTY THAT THE BARENTS SEA SOUTH OF SPITZBERGEN IS
RICH IN OIL. THE RUSSIANS ARE TRYING TO GET BP TO
HELP THEM DEVELOP THEIR SHARE OF IT. WHEN THE SEA
IS DELINEATED, MUCH OF THIS OFFSHORE OIL WILL
PRESUMABLY BELONG TO SPITZBERGEN. BRITAIN IS ONE OF
THE COUNTRIES WHICH SIGNED THE SPITZBERGEN AGREEMENT
AND WHAT IS MORE SHE SIGNED FOR GOOD MEASURE ON BEHALF
OF CERTAIN OF THE DOMINIONS. DID SHE SIGN IT ON
BEHALF OF THE IRISH FREE STATE, ONE WONDERS?

AND IF SHE DID, WILL FIANNA FAIL THE REPUBLICAN PARTY
ACCEPT THAT A BRITISH SIGNATURE ON BEHALF OF THE
IRISH FREE STATE AS ONE OF HIS MAJESTY'S DOMINIONS
CAN BE INVOKED AS A TITLE TO A SHARE OF THE OIL? KRENE

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